

REMARKS

The title has been amended in view of the Examiner's objection in paragraph 2 of the Office Action. The new title is indicative of the invention to which the claims are directed.

The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a) as failing to show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. A replacement drawing sheet is being submitted herewith for the Examiner's review. In this replacement drawing sheet, Figures 4 and 5 have been amended to include the features and/or reference numerals for the features noted by the Examiner. The specification has been amended at paragraphs [0025] and [0026] to correspond with the amended drawings. The specification has also been amended at paragraph [0001] in view of the cancellation of claims 1 and 14 in the preliminary amendment previously submitted in this application.

Claims 19 and 36 have been amended in view of the Examiner's objections and rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as noted in paragraphs 3-7 of the Office Action.

No new matter has been added.

ARGUMENTS

The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a) as failing to show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. In particular, the Examiner notes that the drawings fail to show the following features: Loads; Cable; Two rigid components; Connecting means; Holding member; and Signal Line embodied as a flexible sealing element. Figures 4 and 5 are being submitted herewith for the Examiner's review. It is Applicant's position that the drawings now show each and every feature of the claimed invention as follows:

Loads-reference numerals 101 in Fig. 4 and 201 in Fig. 5;

Cable-Term replaced in Claim 19 by phrase "signal line", which is what was originally intended;

Two rigid components-reference numerals 102 and 103 in Fig. 4; and

Connecting means-an example of the connecting means is shown by reference numeral 5 in Fig. 2, and hence, already shown in the figures.

Holding members-These holding members are shown in Figs. 1, 2 and 3, and hence, already shown in the figures.

Signal Line embodied as a flexible sealing element-this feature is shown in Figs. 6, 7 and 8.

In view of the amended Figs. 4 and 5 and the comments set forth above, it is respectfully requested that the objection to the drawings under 37 CFR 1.83(a) be withdrawn as the drawings show every feature of the invention specified in the claims.

The title is objected to as being non-descriptive. A new title is being submitted herewith that is indicative of the invention to which the claims are directed.

Claim 36 is objected to because in line 2, "as" should be changed to --in--. Claim 36 has been amended according to the Examiner's suggestions.

Claims 19-36 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. In particular, the Examiner states that "the cable" and "the sleeve" lack proper antecedent basis. The Examiner also objects to the phrase "Gripping means for a signal line".

Claim 19 has been amended to change the phrase "the cable" to --the signal line-- , which has antecedent basis in the claim. Additionally, the phrase "the sleeve" has been changed to --a sleeve--. The phrase "Gripping means for a signal line" has been amended to --Gripping means for gripping on a signal line-- .

In view of the amendments to claim 19, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of claims 19-36 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, be withdrawn.

Claims 19-24 and 27-36 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,521,767 to Bridge. The Examiner alleges that Bridge teaches each and every limitation of the claims. In particular, the Examiner states that Bridge teaches a gripping means for gripping a cable having a signal line 4 and sleeve 5 wherein the gripping means comprises a rigid component 2 and a spring element 6 made of flexible material, which exerts a biasing force on the rigid component. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection for the reasons set forth below.

Bridge fails to teach the claimed features of a rigid component and a spring element engaging on the rigid component to remove the load of this rigid component from the signal line. Bridge teaches that the signal line (fiber optic filament 4) is positioned within

a groove 3 of a carrier strip 2. This carrier strip 2 is bound with a bonding agent 6 and enclosed by adhesive tape 7. Bridge further teaches at col. 3, lines 20+ that the carrier strip 2 is unwound from a reel and passed successively through a punching station to form the longitudinal groove for receiving the fiber optic cable and is then re-wound at a re-reeling station. Thus, Bridge clearly teaches that the carrier strip 2 is flexible as opposed to the claimed feature of a rigid component and there are no rigid parts in the Bridge system.

With respect to the claimed feature of a spring element engaging on the rigid component to remove the load of this rigid component from the signal line, the Examiner alleges that the adhesive material 6 performs this function. The Bridge system teaches that the bonding agent 6 is flexible at col. 1, lines 56-58 and is described as holding the fiber 4 in the groove at col. 2, lines 54-56. Bridge further teaches at col. 2, line 13 that the bonding agent 6 positions the guide means against the groove. Accordingly, the bonding agent 6, in combination with tape 7, acts as a holding means for retaining the fiber 4 within the groove of the carrier strip 2. Accordingly, the bonding agent 6 of Bridge fails to function as a spring element engaging on the rigid component to remove the load of this rigid component from the signal line as specifically recited in the claims.

For the reasons set forth above, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of claims 19-24 and 27-36 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) be withdrawn as Bridge fails to teach each and every limitation of the claims.

Claims 25-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Bridge in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,703,754 to Hinze.

The Examiner alleges that Bridge discloses all of the features of the claims except the claimed feature of a hardness of the rigid component being between 10-100 Shores and the spring element has a hardness less than 60 Shore. The Examiner relies upon Hinze as teaching the use of materials having a hardness within this range. The Examiner asserts that it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art to make the rigid component in Bridge to have a hardness of 10-100 Shores in view of Hinze depending upon the intended use of the product. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection for the reasons set forth below.

As discussed in detail above, Bridge fails to teach a rigid component and a spring element as set forth in the claims. Hinze fails to overcome these deficiencies in the Bridge system. Hinze shows adhesive sealants as materials used for construction of a

housing of circuit boards. In the event case components are carried on the outboard surface of the circuit board and are thus covered by the compound, a Shore hardness of 40-50 after curing of the sealant are preferred (col. 3, lines 34-35). The function of this hardness is apparently to make the board tamper deterrent and tamper evident (col. 3, line 42). This implies that the cured sealant has a lack of resilience, as resilient materials would come back to their original form after a tampering attempt.

One having ordinary skill in the art would not be motivated to used the materials described by Hinze in the construction of Bridge, as the Bridge construction must be bendable (col. 2, lines 45-46), in order to enable winding on a reel (col. 3, lines 15-34). The sealants of Hinze are not bendable, and hence are incompatible with the construction of Bridge. If one were to use the tamper-evident sealants of Hinze in the construction of Bridge, these sealants would break once bending or winding was attempted. Moreover, as stated above, the combination of Bridge with Hinze would not lead to the invention as recited in base claim 19 as the rigid element and spring element are still lacking in Bridge.

For the reasons set forth above, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of claims 25-26 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) be withdrawn as the combination of Bridge with Hinze fails to render these claims obvious.

CONCLUSION

Based on the foregoing amendments and remarks, reconsideration of the rejection and allowance of pending claims 19-36 is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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